



Northern  
Ireland  
Office

**LOCAL PARTNERSHIP WORKING ON POLICING &  
COMMUNITY SAFETY: A WAY FORWARD**

Consultation Paper

March 2009

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The Government is aware that the current structures for local engagement, planning, delivery and monitoring in the policing and community safety field are not ideal. Despite the best efforts of those working on the ground to support these existing structures, having CSPs and DPPs operating in broadly the same field, with often overlapping responsibilities and frequently overlapping membership, can and has contributed to confusion and frustration. At the same time, the changes proposed in local government, with the creation of eleven district councils and the introduction of community planning, mean that some review of these partnerships' functions is timely.
2. The Government's Review Group has looked at possible future models, and there appears to be the potential for an integrated local partnership, fulfilling all the existing functions of the existing CSPs and DPPs. In order to maintain their effectiveness, some distinction would need to be made between the delivery functions currently performed by CSPs and the monitoring functions performed by DPPs; but the functions of public engagement, prioritisation and planning could be performed by an integrated partnership as a whole.
3. The Government is conscious that a final decision on the shape of an integrated partnership will need to be taken in the devolved context by a local Minister for Justice. Nevertheless, some changes will be necessary anyway in time to meet the challenge posed by the creation of the new councils in 2011 and the associated development of community planning. Therefore, with the potential for an integrated partnership in mind, the Government proposes to set out a number of possible intermediate measures to ensure that a future partnership can be created through a process of evolution. The intention is to prepare CSPs and DPPs for a future integration without prejudicing the decisions of a Minister for Justice with regard to any future integration.

4. There are already districts where more co-ordinated working between DPPs and CSPs have demonstrated the effectiveness of closer relations. Critical factors have included a combined administration, one person chairing both partnerships, and a co-ordinated programme of engagement and planning. It makes sense to consider whether these steps, or a gradation of them, could be more widely applied.
5. There will still be substantial steps to be taken before any integration could take place. The local planning and reporting processes of the CSPs and DPPs feed into the regional processes of the NIO (and then the devolved Department of Justice) and the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) respectively, and co-ordination at a local level will need to be met by co-ordination at regional level. Administrative co-ordination will need to be managed locally in light of existing obligations. Until any radical reordering takes place, the CSPs and DPPs will continue to be funded – and accountable for that funding – to different sponsor organisations.
6. More important than structural and organisational alignment will be the cultural change from having distinct DPPs and CSPs to having a single local partnership responsible for the range of related functions. The challenge that the Government wishes to set is for the existing partnerships to grow together, so that should a Minister for Justice endorse the creation of an integrated partnership following the reform of local government in 2011, that integrated partnership will constitute a small change from existing practice, rather than a major shift. A suggested process for taking forward this work, assuming sufficient consensus can be achieved in the next few months, is attached at **Annex A**.
7. This paper aims, therefore, to set out some ideas on how we might best prepare for the future challenges and opportunities presented by the anticipated local government reforms, and poses a number of questions on which we would welcome the views of key stakeholders (the Northern Ireland Policing Board, local councils, Community Safety Partnerships and

District Policing Partnerships). A list of consultation questions is attached at **Annex B**. We are not proposing to go to full public consultation at this stage, since we believe it is more sensible to take on board first the views of those who understand and operate these arrangements.

8. The Government hopes that the outcome of this engagement with key stakeholders will be:
  - an agreement in principle that we should be aiming to create fully integrated partnerships at local level as the new councils come into being in May 2011;
  - subject to the views of an incoming devolved minister, an agreed plan for how we can work collectively to achieve this, including how and when we would consult publicly on a new integrated model; and
  - the identification of a number of practical measures that could be taken immediately to more closely align existing CSP and DPP arrangements.

**Northern Ireland Office**  
**March 2009**

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

***This chapter gives a brief background to the current CSP and DPP arrangements and sets out the rationale for reviewing these now.***

1. The vision of the NIO is to make Northern Ireland a safer place to live, work and visit. We want to see a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour, and a reduction in the fear of crime.

2. Central to this vision is a highly effective police service which has the confidence of the whole community for its fairness and for its success in delivering a safer society. Public confidence in the police is not only a positive consequence of effective policing; it is a crucial prerequisite for effectiveness. Without the confidence of the public to engage with the police in general and to cooperate with them in individual cases, the police cannot work effectively. The police need the public at large to show them what needs to be addressed, and to assist them in upholding the standards of behaviour that society expects.

3. Public confidence is enhanced through ensuring effective engagement between the public and the police, and also by clarity about the way in which the police respond to the needs of the community. At the regional level, the Chief Constable is accountable to the Policing Board. At a local level, people need to see that the local police are meeting local needs and responding to local concerns.

4. The Government also recognises that the safety of the community is not simply a matter of policing, nor a matter just for the police. There are many players in addressing crime and antisocial behaviour: statutory and non-statutory agencies with a remit to work in communities, and individuals and groups with an interest in the well-being of their own neighbourhoods. These various groups and individuals work most effectively when they work in partnership.

## **Current Arrangements**

5. Following the Patten Report and the Criminal Justice Review flowing from the Belfast Agreement, the Government put into place new structures to meet the needs of policing and community safety in Northern Ireland as the region began to leave the conflicts of the past behind. These new arrangements both reflected the transition to a more normal policing environment, and sought to encourage and drive on that transition.

6. At a regional level, the Policing Board was established as an independent body, and the Community Safety Unit was set up within the NIO. In each Council district, a District Policing Partnership and a Community Safety Partnership were established.

7. The three essential functions of public engagement, coordinated delivery and local monitoring were allocated to the DPPs and CSPs.

8. The current functions of the DPPs are to:

- consult with the public to find out what issues in relation to policing and crime are of concern within the council district;
- identify local policing priorities arising from the consultation and recommend these to the District Commander so that they can be taken into account when the Local Policing Plan is being drawn up;
- monitor police performance against the objectives contained in the Local Policing Plan and the Northern Ireland Policing Plan as it relates to the District;
- engage with the community to obtain the cooperation of the public with the police in preventing crime; and
- act as a general forum for discussion and consultation on all matters relating to the policing of the district.

9. The current function of the CSPs is to facilitate implementation and delivery of a community safety strategy at a local level. This includes the functions to:

- carry out regular audits in order to identify local problems and establish priorities;
- consult the community in order to gather information on the perceptions of local residents;
- develop a local strategy and action plan which seeks to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and tackle anti-social behaviour;
- identify which member organisation will be responsible for taking forward the appropriate action to achieve the defined objectives;
- carry out evaluations of proposals in order to evidence good practice and improve performance; and
- help to deliver crime reduction initiatives at local level, including regional initiatives.

10. Following the establishment of these new arrangements, Northern Ireland has seen an increase in public confidence in policing of 6 percentage points to 79% since 2003/04; a 23.9% decline in rates of recorded crime since 2003/04. There has been a decline in rates of anti-social behaviour of 2.6% since 2006/07.

11. These improvements in the safety of communities over the past few years cannot be attributed solely to the roles of DPPs and CSPs, but the Government is confident that they have played an essential role.

12. At the same time, it is clear to Government that the current arrangements can be improved. There is a degree of overlap between the functions of DPPs and CSPs, notably around the engagement with local communities and the identification of local priorities. There is also public confusion about the respective roles of two district-level partnerships operating in broadly the same field.

## **The Changing Environment**

13. The NIO is conscious that things have changed since the establishment of the CSPs and DPPs, and the environment in which they operate will continue to change. It is therefore appropriate to examine the extent to which local partnership arrangements will also need to change.

14. Firstly, the prospect of devolution of policing and criminal justice brings new emphasis upon local solutions to local problems. The current focus upon policing with the community and community safety will become even more acute as the Assembly scrutinizes the impact of a local minister and his or her policies.

15. Secondly, the implementation of the Review of Public Administration will create eleven new councils to replace the twenty-six existing district councils. Because both DPPs and CSPs cover a district council area, this change would require a review of their operation in any event, not least because the greater size of the council means that the partnership will have to operate at a somewhat greater distance from individual neighbourhoods.

16. In addition, the roll-out of the RPA is intended to include the introduction of community planning arrangements. These would include a lead role for the Council in coordinating delivery of public services locally, and a statutory duty upon agencies to participate in coordinating arrangements under the community-planning banner. The twin issues of policing and community safety would seem to be natural subjects of community planning arrangements, and this too precipitates a fresh look at local partnership working.

17. This changing scene, with the key date being the election of the new councils in 2011, is an excellent opportunity to review the functions of the DPPs and CSPs and to make proposals for improvement.



## CHAPTER TWO: OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

*This chapter sets out the main options for the future and the pros and cons of each.*

### Organisational Models

1. There are two existing models in place in Northern Ireland for local partnerships:

- the **DPP model** in which a group of independent and elected figures acts in partnership with the public and sits apart from the delivery arm (in this case the PSNI). It has a key role in engaging with the public and articulating local needs. It then advises on local priorities for the police, and monitors performance against delivery priorities. It does not deliver policing and community safety services itself and does not have a substantial operational budget of its own. Instead it oversees the delivery of those services from another. Whilst it has the potential to become a partnership between the monitors and the monitored, it is essentially external to the delivery of services. This model naturally involves elected members, whose mandate includes the oversight of public services.
- The **CSP model** in which delivery agencies and representatives of the community (elected and *ex officio*) work in partnership together to plan and deliver tailored responses to meet local need. Some members reflect the views of the public, and others deliver services. It has resources of its own from central Government and draws upon the contribution of funds from individual partners' budgets. Whilst it is self-regulating it does not monitor the performance from any one partner, and it is overseen by a regional authority (the Community Safety Unit within the NIO).

2. It would not be possible to maintain one of these models at the expense of the other. Neither would it be appropriate for one simply to absorb the other, given their distinct roles and differences in composition. The Government believes that all the functions of both partnerships are necessary to delivering the vision of a safer Northern Ireland.

3. The main options would appear to be:

a) to **continue as at present** with distinct DPPs and CSPs operating at district-council level;

b) to **maintain both DPPs and CSPs**, rationalising some of the duplicated functions, and bringing administration of the two partnerships closer together; or

c) to create an **integrated partnership** responsible for all the current functions of DPPs and CSPs.

### ***Continue as at present***

4. The option of doing nothing fails to address the need to meet the changing environment described above. And it does not take up the opportunity to improve the existing system which has some recognised weaknesses. Critically, it does not make it any easier for the work of each partnership to inform the other. The Government is particularly conscious that the capacity for DPPs to engage with communities and articulate local needs does not always have a direct impact upon the work of CSPs in determining local priorities. And conversely, the DPPs may identify local priorities which should ideally be addressed with other agencies beside the police, but they do not have the same access to wider delivery mechanisms.

5. We would not be able to continue without any reform, because work would still need to be done to bring these two partnerships into the new era of larger councils and statutory community planning arrangements.

## **a) Continue as at present**

### **Pros:**

- *Involves less change (though 52 partnerships would still have to become 22).*

### **Cons:**

- *Does not avoid the upheaval associated with the move to 11 councils.*
- *Represents a lost opportunity to improve upon existing arrangements in preparation for the implementation of RPA changes.*
- *Impedes the development of coherent and cohesive community planning arrangements.*
- *Partnerships would be more remote from local neighbourhoods, given larger council sizes, at a time when public expectations are growing.*
- *Maintains duplication and public confusion over the respective roles.*

## ***Bring the DPPs and CSPs closer together***

6. It would be possible to maintain DPPs and CSPs as distinct bodies, but draw them closer together. This could be done by rationalising functions to reduce overlap and by sharing resources (which to some extent already happens).

7. A greater degree of synergy could be achieved between CSPs and DPPs if their respective engagement and planning processes were coordinated, or even conducted as a single exercise. This would be further enhanced if it were clear that one body were in the lead at each stage. It would be possible, for instance, for the CSPs to prepare their local strategic

assessments and action plans on the basis of the engagement and prioritisation work being done by the DPP. This would require coordination not only locally, but also at a regional level, to ensure that planning by the Policing Board and the NIO was also in sequence.

8. On a very practical level, there are several administrative arrangements that could be made to enhance cooperation. These are considered in more detail in chapter four.

#### **b) Bring the DPPs and CSPs closer together**

##### **Pros:**

- ***Should be relatively easy to manage.***
- ***Could be done quickly.***
- ***Could allow a larger share of the available “pot” to be spent on projects and initiatives rather than administration.***
- ***Would not require changes to legislation.***
- ***Facilitates greater alignment of planning and engagement activities.***

##### **Cons:**

- ***Is a partial solution and does not maximise the opportunity for streamlining current arrangements.***
- ***Maintains some duplication and public confusion over the respective roles.***
- ***Highlights the current differences between the partnership (e.g. that some members are remunerated and others not).***

## ***An Integrated Partnership***

9. **The creation of a new, integrated partnership, performing all the functions of the current CSPs and DPPs would be the Government's clear preference.** While creating two sets of arrangements made sense at the time, given the extent of political progress that has been made since the Patten and Criminal Justice Reviews there is no real reason why a single partnership could not now be put in place. It would offer the opportunity to clarify and re-emphasise the key functions of engagement, coordination of delivery and monitoring and make sure these are fully aligned. At present, we have a situation where DPPs have extensive arrangements in place for engaging with the public at local level and logging their concerns. In putting forward their concerns, the public expect practical action to be taken by the police and others but there is no bespoke funding for such actions. CSPs, on the other hand, have a good track record of delivering projects and initiatives on the ground through the funding provided by the NIO's Community Safety Unit and match funding from delivery partners.

10. Both DPPs and CSPs work to local plans, but the extent to which these complement each other can vary considerably in different localities depending on how the existing partnerships operate. The overriding consideration must be how best to deliver services to local communities, in response to the needs they identify, through effective partnership working: we firmly believe that a fully integrated partnership is the optimum model for doing this.

11. The real challenge is how to achieve this integration, which is explored in more detail in the next chapter.

### **c) An integrated partnership**

#### **Pros:**

- *Brings together engagement and delivery, allowing the needs articulated by local communities to be better met and thereby enhancing public confidence in the police and other justice agencies.*
- *Allows local councils to show civic leadership, given the foremost concern in neighbourhood surveys is safety.*
- *Puts policing and community safety on the front foot in anticipation of the introduction of community planning.*
- *Helps the right linkages to be made by councils to other related themes in community plans, such as environment, health and education.*
- *Allows a larger share of the available “pot” to be targeted on projects and initiatives that could make a difference at local level, rather than administration.*
- *Fully aligns planning, monitoring and engagement activities.*

#### **Cons:**

- *Creates further upheaval at a time when councils are already planning for major changes.*
- *Differing accountability arrangements may prove difficult to reconcile.*
- *There would probably still need to be some distinction between the monitoring and delivery functions since it would be difficult to integrate these completely.*

## CHAPTER THREE: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIP

*This chapter looks in more detail at the issues that need to be considered in order to arrive at an integrated model.*

1. As stated previously, the Government's preferred option is a fully integrated partnership, which would encompass all of the current functions and responsibilities of CSPs and DPPs. This is the option which appears to us to best meet the overriding aim of improving the service that can be delivered to the community in response to the needs they identify.

2. However, creating a single, integrated partnership raises some fundamental questions around such issues as membership, accountability and resourcing. The practicalities of these issues are explored in some detail in **Annex C**, which also sets out a **possible model** based on the feedback received from the Review Group. It should be emphasised that this is a model rather than the model and that the Government is very open to considering other possibilities, provided these achieve the aim of integrating the current arrangements into a single partnership. Our purpose in including a possible model is to demonstrate in practical terms how some of the issues we have identified might be managed, but it will be for a devolved minister to decide whether this model – or any other which is proposed as part of this stakeholder consultation exercise – is the right one for the future.

3. We are also open to suggestions for what a new integrated partnership should be called – we refer to it as a “policing and community safety partnership” in Annex C but again this is something on which an incoming devolved justice minister will wish to take a view.

## *Functions*

4. The functions of a single partnership responsible for all the current functions of DPPs and CSPs could be summarised as follows:

- to identify strategic priorities for policing and community safety in the local area, in light of local needs;
- to engage with communities in order to identify local issues and articulate community views;
- to obtain the cooperation and confidence of the public in the delivery of policing and community safety;
- to formulate an action plan for the delivery of improved policing and community safety in the area
- to allocate responsibilities for delivery of the plan;
- to coordinate the delivery of cross-cutting projects;
- to deliver crime reduction initiatives at local level;
- to monitor performance against the partnership's objectives;
- to monitor and seek account for performance of the police against locally agreed priorities;
- to evaluate projects for the identification of good practice;
- to act as a general forum for discussion of relevant policing and community safety issues.

**What should a new partnership be called?**

**Should all of the current CSP and DPP functions be maintained?**

**Are there additional functions that could be performed by a new local partnership?**

## *Membership & composition*

5. It will be important that any new partnership reflects the full range of members currently represented on DPPs and CSPs (councillors, statutory agencies, independents and community representatives) but the relative proportions of these different types of members and the relationships between



them will need to be resolved. As part of the process of determining respective roles and responsibilities, a way will need to be found to reconcile the existing (police) monitoring and (collective) delivery functions, as well as determining how each of the members should contribute to overall planning and co-ordination.

**What should be the membership of an integrated partnership – what proportion of councillors, delivery partners, and independent and community representatives?**

**Should any organizations or groups be represented on every partnership?**

**What would be the optimum size and combination? Should any one category of member have a majority?**

**Who should chair the partnership?**

**What do consultees think of the potential model set out in Annex C?**

**What are its strengths and what are its flaws? How could it be improved?**

### *Accountability*

6. A new partnership will need to maintain a number of distinct lines of accountability so as to respect both existing remits (such as the Policing Board's role in overseeing police performance) and new ones (such as the Councils' responsibilities under community planning). The most important point here is that the partnership will need to demonstrate that it is making best use of public funds to meet the needs of local communities.

**To whom should an integrated partnership be accountable for each of its functions?**

### *Resources*

7. Annex C describes the current funding arrangements for CSPs and DPPs and considers a number of options for how future funding might be

channelled. The overall annual budget for the existing partnerships is close to £8 million and sixty percent of this is presently consumed by administration and expenses. Both the move to 11 council areas in 2011 and the proposal to more closely align the existing arrangements open up the opportunity to revisit how this money is spent; this could include a consideration of how and why members are remunerated, in light of the wider modernisation of local government.

**How should an integrated partnership be resourced? What proportions should fall to the department, councils, the Policing Board and others?  
How much is needed in the future for administration?  
Should members receive some remittance?**

#### *Partnership Plan*

8. CSPs currently devise an annual action plan based on a strategic assessment of local needs. DPPs, on the other hand, are instrumental in the development of the Local Policing Plan (though this is owned by the District Commander). The PSNI will need to continue to have Local Policing Plans, but the question arises of what type of plan a new partnership should produce and what input the partnership would need to have into the Local Policing Plans.

**What should an integrated partnership's Plan look like?**

#### *Next Steps?*

9. Even if we are able to establish that there is consensus that a new set of integrated partnerships should be created, it is likely that this stakeholder consultation exercise will elicit a wide range of views on these practical issues. Our intention is to create a Working Group involving the key organisational interests (NIO, DOE, Policing Board, local councils, etc) which would be tasked with taking this work forward to the point where outline proposals could be presented to the future devolved Minister of Justice. If the

devolved Minister confirmed that he or she wished to proceed on the basis of the Group's recommendations, it could then be tasked with developing more detailed proposals for forming the new partnerships. This would include identifying the statutory provisions that would need to be created through Assembly legislation to support co-operative partnership working on the delivery of effective policing and community safety outcomes.

## CHAPTER FOUR: CLOSER ALIGNMENT OF CSPs and DPPs

*This chapter looks at what steps could be taken now to more closely align CSPs and DPPs, in anticipation of further integration in the future.*

1. While the Government believes that a fully integrated partnership represents the best outcome in the medium to longer term, and such partnerships should ideally be in place to coincide with the creation of the eleven new councils in May 2011, we see the potential for a number of intermediate measures to be taken, which could both help to ensure a more seamless transition to these future partnerships, and improve how CSPs and DPPs work together in the short-term. The intention would be to prepare CSPs and DPPs for a future integration without prejudicing the decisions of a Minister for Justice.

2. This could be done within the terms of existing legislation<sup>1</sup>, and within existing resources, with the voluntary co-operation of the main stakeholder interests.

3. As noted previously, there are already districts where DPPs and CSPs do work closely together, and their experiences have demonstrated the practical benefits of closer relations. It is sensible to consider now whether these lessons could be more widely applied, and indeed whether there are other steps that could be taken in the short term.

4. The options for closer alignment could include the following:

- The same person could be Chair of the DPP and Chair of the CSP as a matter of course. Alternatively, the Chair of the DPP could be vice-chair of the CSP and vice versa.

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<sup>1</sup> The Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 prescribed the arrangements for the operation of DPPs, but these provisions do not appear to preclude the type of co-operative working envisaged. The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 contained provisions for the operation of CSPs but these were not commenced.

- DPP and CSP meetings could be held jointly, where practicable.
- There could be joint public engagement events (though one partnership might need to take the lead).
- The planning processes for CSPs and DPPs could be more closely coordinated, and there could be greater consultation between DPPs and CSPs on the content of CSP action plans and local policing plans.
- There could be a shared work programme targeting issues of particular concern at a neighbourhood level.
- DPP and CSP managers could be line managed and accommodated as part of a single team (where this does not already happen) and share administrative support<sup>2</sup>.
- Budgets could be pooled (though funding streams would continue to come from separate sources and lines of accountability would remain unchanged).
- A “best practice” forum could be created to oversee the operation of these arrangements and promote measures that are having a beneficial effect.
- Closer working links could be established between the Policing Board and the NIO’s Community Safety Unit, given their respective roles in overseeing the work of the DPPs and CSPs.

5. This is obviously not an exhaustive list, and other proposals are welcome. It would also be helpful to have views on how quickly these types of measures

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that some CSPs have been set up outside the local council – for instance, under the Local Strategic Partnership – which may make it more difficult to implement this option in those localities.

could be put into place (where they do not currently exist) and whether there are any barriers to their achievement.

**What measures could be taken to bring DPPs and CSPs closer together, short of integration into a single partnership?**

**Should the Working Group be tasked with agreeing these measures and overseeing their implementation, as an early priority?**

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

***This chapter invites you to consider the proposals outlined in this document and to forward your responses.***

1. The Government sees an opportunity to improve the way in which communities are policed and made safer. Local partnership in public engagement, planning and prioritisation, and accountability can be developed beyond the current provisions of DPPs and CSPs. The creation of a single, integrated partnership is not without its challenges. In particular, the different functions of DPPs and CSPs cannot all be performed by all members of an integrated partnership. Nevertheless, we believe that it would be possible to have a unified, effective local partnership working for the benefit of the whole community. Subject to the views of an incoming devolved minister, we should be aiming to have these integrated partnerships in place by May 2011, to coincide with the new local government landscape and to complement the introduction of community planning.

2. In the interim, there is scope to align the working practices of CSPs and DPPs more closely, in anticipation of this further integration and in order to strengthen the linkages between the deployment of resources and the needs of local communities.

## CONSULTATION RESPONSES

We would welcome your views on the issues raised in this document by no later than Thursday 30 April 2009. A summary of the main consultation questions is attached at **Annex B**. Replies should be sent to:

csp-dppconsultation@nio.x.gsi.gov.uk

Or, alternatively, sent to:

Future Partnership Working Consultation  
Community Safety Unit  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Millennium House  
Great Victoria Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7AQ

Fax number: 028 9082 8556

Text phone: 028 9052 7668

Individual responses will not be acknowledged. Respondents should indicate clearly where they are responding on behalf of a group or organisation.

Unless confidentiality is explicitly requested, your response may be made available to others and may be published in a summary of responses to the consultation.



**SEQUENCE OF STEPS TO CREATE INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIPS**

<b>Prior to devolution of responsibility for policing &amp; justice:</b>
Consultation with key stakeholders, with responses sought by end April
Decisions taken on immediate practical steps to achieve closer alignment between existing CSP/DPP structures
Establishment of Working Group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee implementation of immediate practical measures;</li> <li>• Agree outline proposals for fully integrated partnership</li> </ul>
<b>Following devolution of responsibility for policing &amp; justice:</b>
Justice Minister invited to agree outline proposals from Working Group
Working Group tasked with developing detailed policy proposals for the operationalisation of a new fully integrated model
Policy proposals equality screened and public consultation undertaken
Legislative drafting by the Assembly’s Office of Legislative Counsel
Scrutiny by Assembly Committee
NI Executive approval sought
Legislation introduced
Membership and governance of new partnerships confirmed in advance of local government reforms

**SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

**Should we be planning for the creation of new fully integrated local partnerships to coincide with the move to 11 council areas in 2011?**

**Provided sufficient consensus exists on the principle of new integrated partnerships, should the Working Group, which would include the main stakeholder organisations, be invited to agree outline proposals that could be presented to an incoming devolved minister?**

**Are the timescales proposed for achieving the new partnerships realistic (Annex A)? If not, when should we be aiming to have them in place?**

**What views do consultees wish to put forward at this stage on the practical arrangements for these new partnerships, including on the following issues:**

- Should all of the current CSP and DPP functions be maintained?
- Are there additional functions that could be performed by a new local partnership?
- What should be the membership of an integrated partnership – what proportion of councillors, delivery partners, and independent and community representatives?
- Should any organisations or groups be represented on every partnership?
- What would be the optimum size and combination? Should any one category of member have a majority?
- Who should chair the partnership?
- What do consultees think of the potential model set out in Annex C? What are its strengths and what are its flaws? How could it be improved?

- To whom should an integrated partnership be accountable for each of its functions?
- How should an integrated partnership be resourced? What proportions should fall to the department, councils, the Policing Board and others?
- How much is needed in the future for administration?
- Should members receive some remittance, in the context of the wider local government reform agenda?
- What should an integrated partnership's Plan look like?
- What should a new partnership be called?

**What measures could be taken to bring DPPs and CSPs closer together, short of integration into a single partnership?**

**Should the Working Group be tasked with agreeing these measures and overseeing their implementation, as an early priority?**

**CREATING AN INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIP: ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

*Membership and Composition*

1. An integrated partnership would, we presume, be made up of members broadly reflecting the current composition of both DPPs and CSPs – councillors, representatives of statutory and non-statutory delivery bodies, and independent members representing the community more widely as well as bringing their own expertise. Some limit may be needed on numbers, in order that the partnership is not unwieldy, and there may need to be some measure of control over the numbers in each ‘category’ of member, so as to ensure balance.
2. The combination of engagement, delivery and monitoring functions in a single partnership raises specific questions about membership and composition.
3. Firstly, attention would need to be given to the monitoring function. The practice of DPPs monitoring the performance of the District Commander against a Local Policing Plan is unique in the policing and community safety field. Such an arrangement presents a challenge in the context of an integrated partnership where the PSNI District Commander was a member of that Partnership and the same monitoring did not necessarily apply to any other partner. (We know of no examples in the UK or Republic of Ireland of a partnership body which incorporates an accountability mechanism focused on just one of the partners involved.)
4. To extend the same monitoring to other agencies beyond the PSNI is beyond the scope of this exercise; other agencies would not necessarily have the locally delegated resourcing structures that the police have, and

the relevant departments (Health, Social Development, Education *et al.*) will have existing prioritisation, accountability and reporting arrangements. Therefore, we expect that the unique relationship of the PSNI to the DPP in respect of the monitoring function would be preserved in any new integrated partnership, and not extended to other agencies.

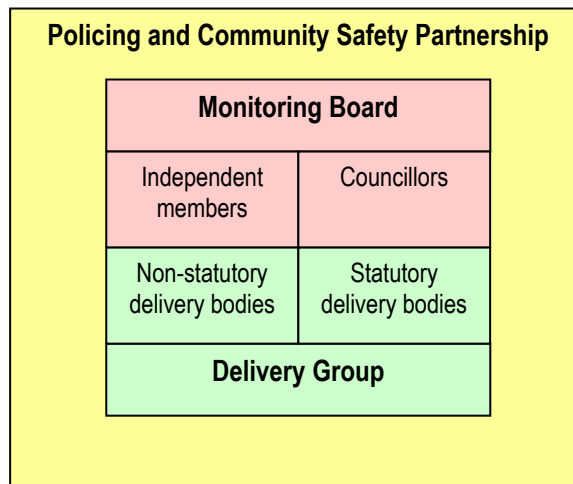
5. The Government is not persuaded that the whole partnership ought to be responsible for monitoring the performance of the police. In particular, it would be inappropriate for officials from other delivery agencies to be monitoring the work of the PSNI District Commander. To some extent, the maintenance of a monitoring function is a challenge to the principle of a fully integrated partnership. However, it would be possible for one part of the partnership, comprising elected and independent members, to fulfil this function.
6. Similarly, the delivery function would not be carried out by the whole partnership; not all the partners would have a delivery role. Rather, there would be one part of the partnership which would be responsible for delivery, within their existing organisational remits.
7. This delivery function might be best organized at two (or even more) levels. Any operational delivery group would want to include as many contributors as possible to have the greatest impact. Conversely the strategic partnership would need to be more carefully limited in number to ensure effectiveness and avoid being dominated by operational delivery partners. The delivery function, comprising both statutory and non-statutory organisations, could therefore be organised both at an operational level, reporting into the integrated partnership working at a more strategic level. This would also reflect the need for the district-level partnership to be operating at a strategic level over a relatively wide area (wider than at present, because of the move from 26 to 11 councils), and the crucial importance of effective local delivery.

8. *What emerges from this discussion is the possibility of an integrated partnership comprising two distinct parts.*
9. An integrated Policing and Community Safety Partnership would be a council-wide strategic body made up of community, business, political and agency representatives. These members would belong to the Partnership as a whole *and* to one or other of two parts of the Partnership – the Monitoring Board and the Delivery Group:
  - a. the Monitoring Board would comprise Councillors and independent members;
  - b. the Delivery Group would comprise the area heads of delivery organisations – both statutory and non-statutory bodies, including voluntary groups, unions and businesses.
10. Together these two parts would meet as the full Partnership to:
  - a. engage with communities on the needs and priorities across the council area in community safety and policing. This would include providing the forum for the public to ask questions of those responsible for local policing and community safety;
  - b. raise with partners the issues affecting the area in respect of community safety and policing;
  - c. draw up and agree a local plan for community safety and policing, including the broad direction and strategic objectives reflecting local priorities.
11. The full partnership would, in effect, inherit the engagement and prioritisation functions of both the DPPs and CSPs.
12. The Council would provide a single Secretariat to the full Partnership and to the Monitoring Board and Delivery Group sitting separately. The Partnership would form a part of the community planning arrangements.

13. The Partnership's Monitoring Board would comprise the Councillors and independent members of the Partnership. In addition to their functions as part of the full Partnership, they would:
- a. monitor performance of delivery partners against the Plan as a whole;
  - b. monitor the performance of the PSNI against the Local Policing Plan;
  - c. oversee the use of those resources committed to the work of the Partnership, including those of the Council.
14. In some senses, this Monitoring Board would be the successor to the monitoring function of the DPP, but would have an extended responsibility for overseeing delivery of the full Partnership's broader plan.
15. The Partnership's Plan and the Local Policing Plan would naturally be closely related, because they would be responding to the same local concerns and arise from the same process of public engagement. They probably could not, however, be incorporated into a single Plan because the former would belong to the partnership and the latter would belong to the district commander. The role of the Monitoring Board in overseeing delivery against both plans is therefore listed as two separate functions, although they would inevitably be closely related.
16. The Partnership's **Delivery Group** would comprise those members of the Partnership who were able to deliver services to the public, including statutory and non-statutory agencies, representatives from the voluntary sector and the business community, *etc.* *In addition* to their functions as part of the full Partnership, they would:
- a. devise an action plan to deliver the Partnership's Plan;
  - b. allocate lead responsibility for delivery on specific issues, and coordinate delivery between partners;
  - c. set up task groups to address specific cross-cutting issues.

17. The Delivery Group would inherit the planning, coordination and delivery functions of the CSPs.

18. The arrangements for fulfilling the delivery functions at ground level would be a matter for each local partnership to determine. This would allow for considerable flexibility and variation to meet local needs. A number of options are possible but the expectation would be that Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (including the Delivery Group) would in all cases operate at a strategic level, and some kind of operational delivery tier would be necessary.



**What do consultees think of this potential model? What are its strengths and what are its flaws? How could it be improved?**

*Accountability – Monitoring*

19. The mixed functions of the Partnership would require a number of distinct lines of accountability. A crucial element of this will be accountability for the use of public funds, to which we will return. First, there needs to be consideration of accountability for the different functions.

20. The monitoring of the PSNI by the Monitoring Board would naturally fall within the existing remit of the Policing Board. The Monitoring Board



would therefore report to the Policing Board on those functions. The Monitoring Board's functions would, in practice, go beyond policing to include oversight of the whole partnership's performance; on this, the Monitoring Board would report to the Council, but this need not affect the crucial relationship with the Policing Board. The Policing Board would be responsible for the appointment of independent members of the Monitoring Board, just as it is currently responsible for appointing to the DPPs. (Councillor members would continue to be nominated on the basis of the relative strength of political representation in the District.)

21. Because of its direct relationship, the Monitoring Board would also be the principal conduit through which the full partnership dealt with the Policing Board. In particular, the work of the partnership in engaging with communities and ascertaining local issues and priorities would need to be fed back to the Policing Board to inform the preparation of the Policing Plan.

#### *Accountability – Delivery*

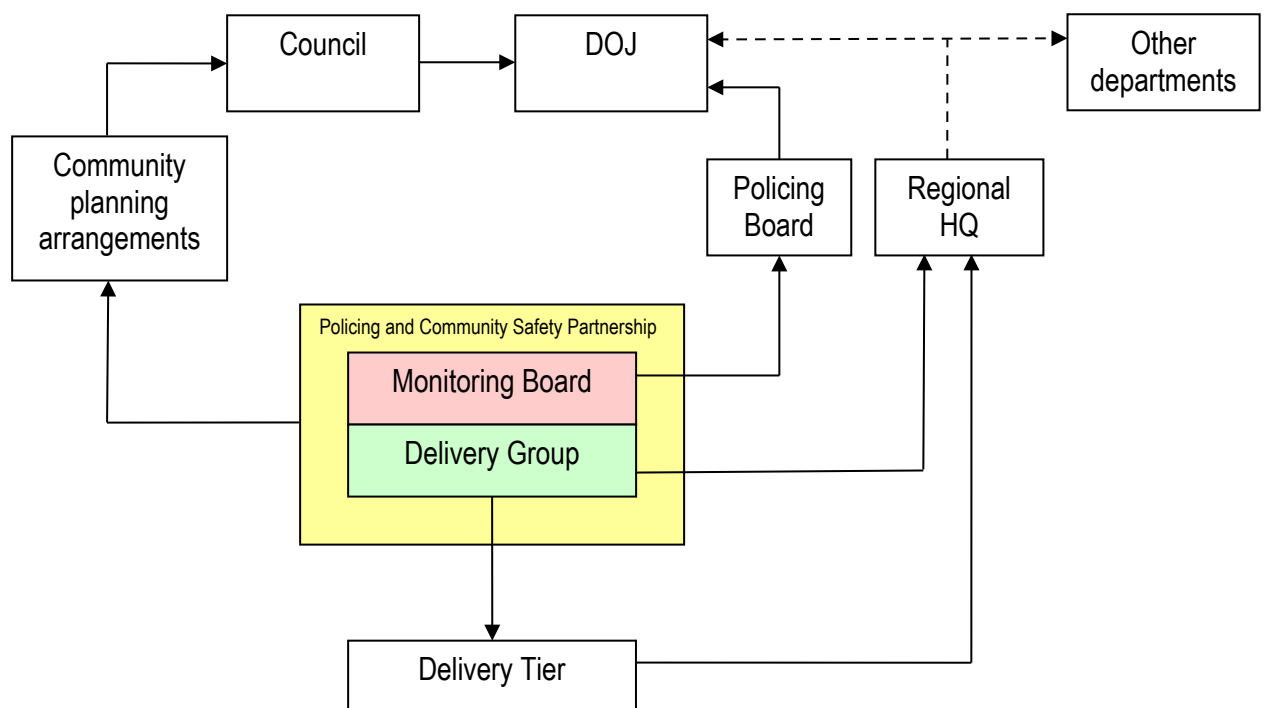
22. Individual delivery partners would always have to give account first of all to their regional or national headquarters, and in the case of statutory agencies through them to their respective departments (and in the case of the PSNI to the Policing Board). Their contribution to work undertaken within the context of the Partnership would always have to tally with their existing priorities. For some this may limit their capacity to contribute, but for most we would expect their goals to run broadly in line with those of the partnership.

#### *Accountability – Overall*

23. The issue of how the partnership as a whole will report to an overarching authority is also multifaceted. The community planning model would suggest that a new partnership would be accountable principally to the Council, which will lead in community planning. At the same time, the

delivery of policing and community safety outcomes will ultimately contribute to the Department of Justice's (DOJ's) objectives. Of course, both are possible, with the department delegating delivery of local outcomes to the integrated Policing and Community Safety Partnership through the Councils.

24. There would, therefore, be a combination of lines of accountability for the different elements of the partnership, as set out in the diagram below.



**To whom should an integrated partnership be accountable for its functions?**

*Resources*

25. Any new partnership will need to command resources in order to deliver benefits locally.

26. The delivery function would be the most resource intensive, but these resources would primarily be allocated by partner agencies to agreed

programmes or prioritised within the partner agencies in line with the agreed local priorities. Accountability for these resources would be through the individual agencies to their regional headquarters.

27. A more radical option would be for the partner agencies to pool resources by contributing to a single partnership budget. This raises more difficult questions about accountability for public money, in particular the need to ensure that resources are spent within the ambit of the contributing agency.

28. The experience of CSPs has been that even a small operational budget held by the partnership itself (rather than by individual members) can be vital in ensuring that local projects are supported by delivery partners. This kind of seed funding can make worthwhile projects viable. CSPs have also been resourced from the centre to run regional programmes, and this may continue to be an important function. Accountability for these resources would be to the partnership's sponsor (which is considered below).

29. Any new partnership will also require administrative funding for its own staff and expenses. At present, administrative costs account for approximately £1.15m out of the total budget of £3.67m for CSPs and approximately £3.5m out of the total budget of £4.1m for DPPs. (The differential can be accounted for because members of DPPs are paid, whereas members of CSPs are not, and DPP members' allowances and associated costs amount to £1.58m.) There is a statutory requirement for Councils to fund 25% of the cost of DPPs, and Councils also provide a degree of match-funding for CSPs.

30. A number of options arise for the future direct funding of an integrated partnership. All funding could be channelled through a single sponsor, or different streams of funding could be channelled through different sponsors. Accountability for functions would usually run in parallel with resourcing those functions and accountability for those resources.

Following that pattern, the operational budget for an integrated budget would come in part from the DOJ, and in part from the Council. The administrative budget would come in part from the DOJ directly, in part from the Policing Board, which would sponsor the Monitoring Board, and in part from the Council. The extent to which other contributing agencies would be able to act as sponsors for the Partnership itself may be worth exploring, but is probably beyond the scope of the current exercise.

31. The question arises of whether, following the pattern of the DPPs, members should receive some remittance for their contribution, and how this would be funded. Consultees are invited to indicate their views.

**How should an integrated partnership be resourced? What proportions should fall to the department, councils, the Policing Board and others? Should members receive some remittance?**

*The Partnership Plan*

32. The question of resourcing is closely connected to that of the partnership's 'Plan'. That is to say, the resource available to the partnership will inform the extent of its plan.

33. The CSPs and DPPs offer two distinct models in this regard. The CSPs devise a community safety action plan with actions which are either financed by the partnership or are resourced by partner agencies making contributions. The DPPs, on the other hand, are instrumental in the preparation of the Local Policing Plan (although the Plan remains in the ownership of the District Commander) which sets out priorities and targets which govern the allocation of resources for the District in total. Consequently the former has a plan consisting of projects and programmes funded by a relatively modest operational budget, and the latter oversees a plan consisting of priorities and targets governing the operational budget of that agency locally. The CSP determines how it

spends its own money, whereas the DPP does not determine how the District Commander allocates resources to meet the agreed targets,

34. We would expect both types of planning to continue. The integrated partnership would still need to plan strategic programmes and projects which it funds itself; and the Monitoring Board would still be overseeing the District Commander's Local Policing Plan. Crucially, what should also be possible is a greater overlap between the two, not least because the District Commander would be a member of the partnership which was setting local priorities.

35. Building upon the organizational model set out above, we imagine that the partnership as a whole would determine local priorities and set local targets which covered the whole range of policing and community safety issues. These would be reflected in the Local Policing Plan, and where possible in local plans of other delivery bodies. The PSNI would be monitored on its delivery against these priorities by the partnership's monitoring function (although other delivery partners would not be monitored in this way). Other delivery agencies would need to ensure that the agreed local priorities were consistent with their regional priorities and targets – hence the importance of those priorities being agreed by the whole partnership, including the delivery agencies themselves.

36. The partnership's Plan would expand upon the local priority issues, so that where those issues could best be met by coordinated action or by programmes funded centrally by the partnership, the Plan would set out the action that the partnership would take itself, with an indication of the lead partner where appropriate. It would also be possible for the individual agencies to include their own key projects or activities in the plan, in order to give a rounded picture of local activity.

**What should an integrated partnership's Plan look like?**